(a) whether SEBI has recommended Government to order a CBI probe into Reliance's debenture deal with UTI in the early 1990s;

(b) if so, whether Government are also aware that Reliance's debenture deal with UTI in early 1990s have caused losses to Government worth several crores; and

(c) if so, the facts and details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) to (c) SEBI has sent a report about these debenture issues of Reliance Industries Limited subscribed by the erstwhile Unit Trust of India, suggesting appropriate action including referring the matter to CBI for investigation. SEBI has also initiated investigation proceedings with respect tothe validity of the debenture issues. The loss, if any, would be known only after the investigation is completed.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Leasing of shops at Airports

1232. SHRI S.M. LAL JAN BASHA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any policy regarding leasing out of space for shops at airports by the Airports Authority of India;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that such shops charge high prices for consumables; and

(d) whether it is also a fact that there is no control of AAI regarding the prices they charge from passengers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The licence for different kinds of shops at airports is granted through call of open tenders from the experienced parties/individuals for a period of 5 years on pre-determined terms and conditions of the licences agreement.

(c) and (d) The licenses are required to sell the branded items on printed Market Retail Price. In case of other consumable items available for sale in the shops, restaurant and snack bars and through vending

machines, the prices are approved by the Airport Director of the concerned Airport and displayed in the licensed premises at prominent location. As and when complaints of over-charging are received, the same are attended to at the respective airport promotly.

Enhancing seat capacity on International Routes

1233. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that while the availability of seats on the main routes is slowly decreasing, Government's open sky policy to permit more international airlines to operate on these sectors has failed to take off;

(b) whether it is a fact that while there is a poor response from the US and Europe carriers, others are willing to increase their flights on these routes; and

(c) if so, the details of plan to increase its capacity on international flights?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) No, Sir. Availability of seats in Winter, 2002 (November, 2002-April, 2003) has gone up by 5324 seats per week against the corresponding period of the previous year. Besides additional 20,215 seats per week have been deployed by various foreign airlines so far taking advantage of the "open sky policy" adopted by the Government of India.

(b) and (c) During the "Open sky policy", two European carriers, namely Lufthansa Airlines and Virgin Atlantic have mounted additional flights so far on Frankfurt-Bangalore and London-Delhi sector respectively. Airlines from other regions such as Singapore Airlines, Malayasia Airlines, Emirates, Sri Lankan Airlines and South African Airways also operated additional flights as part of the open sky policy.

Separate company for ground handling operations by AI

1234. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA:
SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNITA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to create a separate subsidiary of Air India for its ground handling operations;